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CHAPTER: ADMINISTRATIVE POLICIES		
	CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES AGENCY  Approved by: _____ Signature of Agency Director	PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS
EFFECTIVE DATE:	LATEST REVISION: October 27, 2004	Legal Approval on: November 18, 2004

I. AUTHORITY	The Director of the Child and Family Services Agency adopts this policy to be consistent with the Agency's mission and applicable federal and District of Columbia laws and regulations as set forth by DC ST §2-531 - §2-536, §4-1303.32.
II. APPLICABILITY	All Agency employees and contracted personnel.
III. RATIONALE	CFSA is a central access point for information regarding child/family specific issues and relative services within the District of Columbia. CFSA has an obligation to keep key stakeholders informed; to respond to queries from the media and general public, and the right to protect and enhance its image. CFSA has a further responsibility to protect the confidentiality of the children it is vested to protect.
IV. POLICY	CFSA shall work cooperatively with District and community agencies, providers, citizens, advocates and members of the media to promote public awareness about agency policy as well as child/family services and issues.
V. CONTENTS	A. Agency Logo/Graphic Image B. Public-Media Relations C. External Communication D. Freedom of Information Requests
VI. PROCEDURES	Procedure A: Agency Logo/Graphic Image 1. The black and white version of the official logo for the Child and Family Services Agency is shown below. The logo is used to identify official agency property such as stationary, forms, publications, and web sites. Unofficial use of the agency logo is prohibited. CFSA's Office of Public Information (hereafter referred to as OPI) is the authority on the Agency logo and its uses.

	<p>2. The logo may appear in the size most compatible with each instance of official use as long as its overall proportions remain constant. When the logo is printed in color, the original coloring must be used. <u>Altering the logo design, typeface, proportions, and/or color is strictly prohibited.</u></p> 	
	<p>Procedure B: Public-Media Relations/ Office of Public Information Roles/Responsibilities</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. The CFSA Office of Public Information (hereafter referred to as OPI) shall respond to public questions/inquiries effectively, accurately and promptly.2. All responses to public questions/inquiries shall be handled courteously and comprehensively.3. When an inquiry leads to a referral elsewhere (in or out of CFSA), the OPI shall invite the requestor to re-contact OPI if he/she does not make progress or needs further information.4. The CFSA OPI holds the initial and primary responsibility for interacting with the media.5. Employees shall refer all media queries to the OPI immediately.6. The OPI generates and/or coordinates media coverage of the Agency, acts as a clearinghouse for Agency information, and organizes media interviews and photography/videotaping within Agency facilities.7. When representatives of the media are on CFSA premises, an OPI staff member, or designee, shall serve as an escort.8. Agency Spokespersons: Routine Media Queries<ol style="list-style-type: none">a. In general, the Agency Director, Principal Deputy Director, Program Deputy Directors, and/or the Public Information Officer shall act as primary spokespersons for the Agency.b. Alternate spokespersons may be asked to respond when a media request is complex and/or concerns their particular area(s) of expertise, authority, responsibility, and/or accountability.c. Spokespersons shall be authorized by the Agency Director, Principal Deputy Director, Program Deputy Directors and/or the Public Information Officer. No employee shall act as a spokesperson for CFSA without the guidance of the OPI.d. On a case-by-case basis, the OPI (a) handles media inquiries directly and/or (b) selects and prepares the best management spokesperson(s), and/or (c) works with managers to identify and prepare other staff members to speak to the media.	
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	<p>9. Client Confidentiality (See also the Confidentiality Policy)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. All media and public relations activities are subject to the CFSA confidentiality policy. b. CFSA does not allow the media to interview, photograph, or videotape clients without the client's/caregiver's formal written consent in advance. c. When client input is vital to a story, the OPI shall work with appropriate CFSA staff to obtain informed consent to participate from clients and obtain client signatures that waive their right to confidentiality for purposes of a specific media interview only. d. With regard to the use of photographs, when a child is under 18 years of age, the parent or legal guardian must consent to the use of the photograph. If, however, parent/legal guardian cannot be located, the court can be asked to either consent or give CFSA the authority to consent. e. CFSA service providers shall also obtain written consent before using CFSA client stories and/or photographs in their publications, videos, or web sites. <p>10. Public Records Requests</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. CFSA is committed to free and open provision of information about our mission, programs, services, initiatives, policies, and role as a public agency serving children and families. b. Information about specific cases and circumstances of specific children and families are governed according to federal and District statutes (DC ST §2-531 - §2-536, §4-1303.32) and agency policy regarding personal privacy and the confidentiality of client information.
	<p>Procedure C: External Communication</p> <p>For purposes of this policy, "external communication" is official printed, recorded, electronic, or verbal information targeted toward agency external stakeholders on a mass (not individual or small-group) basis. Agency "external stakeholders" are the whole group, or any large subgroup, of: (1) clients; (2) contractors, providers, and other partners; (3) monitors; (4) child/family advocates; and the general public.</p> <p>1. Public Information</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. "Public information" is any item that meets any or all of the following criteria: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Printed, recorded, and/or electronic material created or procured by CFSA; ii. That communicates official information to external stakeholders; iii. On a mass basis. b. Public information includes, but is not limited to: banners, booklets, brochures, direct-mail letters, emails, fact sheets, flyers, handbooks, manuals newsletters, posters, signs, videos, and web sites. c. Excluded from this definition are: agency forms, individual automatic

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	responses to incoming email, individual correspondence, official notices automatically generated by a computer system, and reports mandated by law or court orders.
	<p>2. Centralized Development/Review and Approval</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Responsibility for recommending, conceptualizing, developing, and producing Agency public information is centralized within the Office of Public Information. b. The OPI initiates development of public information, fulfills program requests for public information based on identified need, and revises existing agency public information as needed. c. When public information is developed at the program level, it shall be submitted to the OPI for review and approval before distribution and with sufficient lead-time to allow for a thorough review. d. CFSA may obtain official public information from other organizations, if it is of value to our external stakeholders and/or eliminates duplication of effort. Examples include, but are not limited to publications or videos from the federal government, National Association of Social Workers, Child Welfare League of America, etc. e. Selection and distribution of non-mandatory public information from other organizations is at the discretion of the OPI. <p>3. "Advertising" is any item that meets all of the following criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Printed, recorded, and/or electronic public information or promotional material b. Created or produced by CFSA for external stakeholders and c. Distributed via paid or donated space/time in local, regional or national mass media. <p>4. Employee Recruitment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Development and placement of Agency advertising to recruit employees is under the sole purview of the CFSA Human Resources Department. b. Human Resources is the only entity authorized to commit the Agency to paid or public service advertising for purposes of employee recruitment. c. Managers with a need to recruit workers shall contact Human Resources for assistance. <p>5. Legal Notices</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Development and placement of legal notices are on an as-needed basis to fulfill legal requirements. Examples include, but are not limited to, notification of: competitive bids, availability of material for public inspection, and public meetings or hearings. b. Staff at the level of Program Administrator or above shall fulfill requirements to place legal notices as they arise.

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	<p>6. Public Information Campaigns</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Development and placement of agency mass-media public information campaigns are under the sole purview of the CFSA OPI. b. The OPI is the only entity authorized to commit CFSA to pay for public service advertising or agency public information for promotional purposes. c. Managers with a need for mass promotion shall contact the OPI with sufficient lead-time to ensure timely, accurate, high-quality, strategic, cost effective advertising. <p>7. Official Agency Representation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Each staff member represents CFSA while in his/her official capacity. b. Formal Speaking Engagements <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. To make the most of every opportunity to further public understanding, CFSA shall provide a knowledgeable, competent speaker for every public/community-speaking request. ii. As official routine spokespersons for CFSA, staff at the level of Program Administrator, and above, may seek or accept formal speaking engagements. They may also designate other employees at any level to speak with or instead of them. iii. Employees below the level of Program Administrator who wish to speak about CFSA before a public, community, or professional group shall obtain approval from the OPI or their Program Administrator before accepting the engagement. iv. Upon advance request, OPI helps Agency speakers prepare for speaking engagements and provides public information materials for handouts. c. Formal Participation on External Groups <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Those at the level of Program Administrator and above may represent the agency on external boards, committees, panels and other groups as long as no conflict of interest exists. They may also designate employees to serve with or instead of them. ii. Administrators are responsible for ensuring that employees representing the agency are free from conflicts of interest. d. Agency Opinion <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Staff shall not submit letters to the editor, op-ed articles, or any other opinion pieces on behalf of CFSA for publication or broadcast by any mass medium without advance permission from the Public Information Officer or designee. ii. OPI prepares or reviews and approves all Agency opinion materials for mass-media publication or broadcast.
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> iii. Staff may express opinions publicly as private citizens, which means not using agency letterhead, telephones, fax machines, postage, or other resources to express their private opinions and not citing any connection with CFSA in expressing their private opinions. <p>8. Events</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Before announcing any CFSA-sponsored event targeted toward any group of external stakeholders, employees shall: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Identify target participants, ii. Develop objectives for the event, and iii. Specify desired outcomes/results. iv. They shall then convey this information to the appropriate Deputy Director for review and approval before announcing, coordinating, and/or promoting the event. b. Employees shall obtain approval from the Chief of Staff before committing CFSA to co-sponsor an event with any outside organization. c. CFSA events shall take place in the District of Columbia unless: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. CFSA is one of several jurisdictions involved and a decision is made to hold the event in another jurisdiction. ii. CFSA is a co-sponsor with another organization that has the major role in financing the event. iii. Target participants for the event are primarily outside the District. <p>9. Endorsements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Any staff member who is asked for an Agency endorsement of a policy, position, event, or proposal shall forward the request to the appropriate Deputy Director for a decision. b. CFSA and agency employees are prohibited from endorsing outside organizations or their products and services for promotional purposes.
	<p>Procedure D: Freedom of Information Requests</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. All requests for records, which specifically cite the D.C. Freedom of Information Act (the "FOIA"), D.C. Code 1-1551 et. seq. (1981), shall be forwarded to the CFSA Public Information Officer. 2. CFSA supports and seeks to comply with all provisions of the D.C. Freedom of Information Act (FOIA).

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